

Collaborative Performance Forum

Kevin Chance presiding, 2:15 to 3:15 p.m., March 21, 2017

Including the moderator, Kevin Chance, there were nine people present. A few of these were interested collegiate members. Kevin mentioned that it was so important to support the college students.

Through an email from an MTNA member who could not be present, some ideas were brought to our attention in order to get the discussion started:

- There should be opportunities within MTNA for duos which include singers and other non-pianist instrumentalists to participate. This would be for pre-college as well as college students.
- MTNA should offer a masterclass each year for collaborative pianists and their partners, particularly for duos.
- There should be a collaborative track added for Pedagogy Saturday which would involve singers and instrumentalists. Benefits and content would need to be decided upon with a target of inclusion for the 2019 MTNA conference. This collaborative track could possibly be offered every other year. A mention was made of the highly successful TMTA Chamber Music Clinic in Fort Worth, which was a ½ day clinic with any mix of instruments. It was pointed out that the clinic was an excellent recruiting tool for teachers. This clinic also included a concert given by the clinician(s).

If a chamber music festival is formed at the state level, the local association would likely follow the same model. An opinion by one forum attendee was that the teachers might have to “force” the students to join an ensemble, but that RETENTION was a major outcome of the ensemble. Pre-college students benefit enormously from these early collaborative experiences.

The negativity of the word, “accompanist,” was noted and ways were discussed on how better to support duos. It was pointed out that the MTNA conference doesn’t offer sessions or competition for art song or violin-piano duo, or piano-string trios for example. Voice and instrumental faculty need to be mentors. There appears to be a lack of knowledge on how to support duos or larger ensembles. Could there be a special rate for non-pianists to join the conference? Other organizations have “a la carte” types of membership. Do musicians join the organization for a specific perk? It was mentioned that the audience needs to be defined. What types of sessions would give identity and support, in a positive way, a collaborative concert audience?

Collaborative sessions such as

- How do artists in ensembles communicate with each other during a performance?
- How, specifically, do pianists communicate with string players?
- A session particularly geared to professional development aimed at highly skilled and artistic players
- How does a pianist coach, for example, a singer?
- How does a teacher incorporate ensemble in the independent studio?

- What would our students like to hear relative to collaborative performance?

Different levels of collaborations need to be recognized

- Those performers who have no experience collaborating
- Those performers who have limited experience collaborating
- Those performers who already possess expertise in collaboration

Music competitions which promote the best collaborative pianists were discussed, particularly the newly initiated MTNA/Stecher and Horowitz two-piano competition. It was noted that two-piano competitions are rather rare and that duo competitions for other instruments with piano, or voice and piano, are even rarer. The advantages of video first rounds of competitions were discussed.

If MTNA decides to offer a different duo competition involving piano with either another instrument or with voice, then a music publisher needs to be identified who could put up the money for a prize. Another idea would be to join with another musical organization to form a new duo competition. If new duo competition(s) could be formed, eventually a chamber music competition could follow.

The term, "intermediate", was discussed. Exactly what does intermediate mean? Does it mean that the piece of chamber music is for pre-college students, or is it for adult amateurs? It was mentioned that commissioned works for chamber music are useful for summer camps. Kevin mentioned that articles for AMT on collaborative subjects would be particularly welcome from collaborative collegiate students. There need to be updated lists of collegiate programs on collaborative performance.

Articles for MTNA publications

- E Journal articles would target mainly the professional collaborative musician
- AMT articles would target a more general audience

Particular articles that would be welcomed are

- Articles on festivals which incorporated chamber works
- Lists of materials to use for incorporating collaborative music into your community
- Articles on ways in which one collaborative musician "coaches" the partner
- Articles on teaching the ensemble director to conduct effectively
- Articles on how to publicize making use of the local arts council

In summary, here are priorities that would help promote collaborative arts;

- Offer master classes
- Offer concert mixtures (more than just a one-time offering) on duo piano, café music, voice and piano, or any other collaborative chamber group particularly involving piano
- Duo collaborative competitions
- Better presentations that address collaborative performance

Respectfully submitted

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